

SN. 09/651,654

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. CANO:013

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 12-15, and 18-21 are now pending in this application for which applicant seeks reconsideration.

Amendment

Independent claims 1, 7, and 13 have been amended to clarify that the plurality of images are different. These claims also have been amended to clarify that the keyword table in the memory is referred to rather than merely stored therein. New claims 19-21 have been added to further define the invention. See at least page 16, lines 13-23, page 22, lines 3-12, and Figs. 5-7 and 11 for support. No new matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 12-15, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sano (USP 5,038,379) in view of Jones (USP 6,415,302). During the recent telephonic interview, the examiner explained that the same rejection have been maintained because the examiner found applicant's argument to be not fully commensurate with the scope of the claims set forth in the independent claims. Specifically, applicant argued that Jones only teaches providing the level of importance between the same story but not between different stories. According to the examiner, the claims, however, do not state that the images are different. In this respect, the claims have been amended to be commensurate with the arguments raised in the previous reply.

Applicant again traverses the art rejection because the combination, even if deemed proper for argument's sake, would not have taught outputting the searched images in the order according to a plurality of levels of importance of the keyword associated with the plurality of different images searched, as now set forth in current independent claims 1, 7, and 13.

Claims 1, 7, and 12 each call for referring to a keyword table in a memory. The keyword table includes a keyword that corresponds to a plurality of different images, and a plurality of levels of importance of the keyword with respect to the plurality of different images. The claims further call for searching the different images according to an input search query related to the keyword, and acquiring the levels of importance of the keyword based on the different images searched. The claims further call for outputting the different images searched in the order according to the levels of importance of the keyword acquired.

The examiner acknowledged that Sano does not teach searching images based on the level of importance of the keywords in relation to the content of the images being searched.

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The examiner thus replied upon Jones (specifically paragraph 11, lines 52-60) for the proposition that searching images based on the level of importance of the keywords in relation to the content of the images being searched would have been obvious.

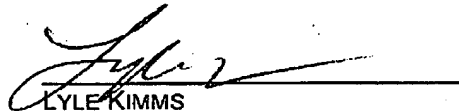
As explained during the interview, Jones merely discloses displaying part of a record, based on the level of importance, by selecting the next/previous story icon. Jones essentially discloses selecting the next/previous story icon to display the story with the next lower or higher level of importance on the same page, but not between different pages. Note that Jones discloses only a particular story on one page. That particular story does not exist on any other page. Accordingly, the level of importance of each of the stories does not differ from page to page. Thus, Jones would not have taught searching based on the level of importance of each of stories with respect to different pages. Accordingly, neither Sano nor Jones would have disclosed or taught outputting images in the order according to a plurality of levels of importance of the keyword associated with a plurality of different images, as set forth in current claims 1, 7, and 13. New claims 19-21 also distinguish over the applied references for the same reasons set forth above and in the previous reply.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that the pending claims patentably distinguish over the applied references and that this application is in condition for allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicant urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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REG. NO. 34,079 (RULE 34, WHERE APPLICABLE)

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